

IN THE DRAWINGS:

Figs. 9A and 9B have been labeled as "Prior Art". Also, a lead line to numeral 112 has been added in Fig. 9A. Furthermore, the sheet containing Figs. 9A and 9B is labeled as "Replacement Sheet" in the top margin.

No new matter is being presented, and approval and entry of the amended and new claims are respectfully requested.

CHANGES TO THE DRAWINGS

At page 2, item 3, of the Office Action, the Examiner objects to the drawings, since Figs. 9A and 9B should be labeled as "Prior Art", and a lead line is missing to numeral 112 in Fig. 9A.

Figs. 9A and 9B have been labeled as "Prior Art". Further, Fig. 9A has been changed to include a lead line for numeral 112. The sheet containing Figs. 9A and 9B is labeled as "Replacement Sheet". Approval of the replacement figures is respectfully requested.

OBJECTIONS TO THE SPECIFICATION

The Specification has been amended to change the name "Verneuil" to "Bernoulli" in accordance with the Examiner's suggestion at page 2, paragraph 4 of the Office Action.

Further, paragraph [0025] of the Specification has been amended to state, "the carrying surface of the adhesion area 24," as suggested by the Examiner.

The Examiner also states that "chucked" in line 26 of paragraph [0021] should be changed to "raised", since chucking is done by nozzles 30. Applicant believes the Examiner is referring to "chucked" in paragraph [0022].

However, the first mode of chucking is performed by the Bernoulli nozzles 30 and the second mode of chucking is then performed by the vacuum chucking nozzles 32 using a vacuum, i.e. suction.

The chucking described in this portion of the Specification is by the chucks 32a of the vacuum chucking nozzles 32 (see also paragraph [0019]), as opposed to chucking by a conical air flow blown out from a tapered opening 30 of a Bernoulli nozzle 30.

Therefore, Applicant has not made this change as suggested by the Examiner. Approval is respectfully requested.

REJECTION OF CLAIM 9 UNDER 35 U.S.C. §112, SECOND PARAGRAPH

On page 2-3 of the Office Action, the Examiner rejects claim 9 since it is an independent claims that incorporates a structure by reference to claim 1.

Claim 9 has been amended herein to stand alone in independent form. Therefore, it is

respectfully submitted that the rejection is overcome.

REJECTIONS OF CLAIMS 1, 4, 5 AND 6 UNDER 35 U.S.C. §102(b) AS BEING ANTICIPATED BY EITHER CORRENTI ET AL. OR BUCHMANN ET AL.

The rejections of claim 1, 4, 5 and 6 are respectfully traversed and reconsideration is requested.

Claim 1 has been amended herein to include the recitations of claim 2. On page 4 of the Office Action, the Examiner states that claim 2 would be allowed if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of claim 1.

Therefore, it is respectfully submitted that claim 1, as amended, is allowable.

Claims 5 and 6 depend from claim 1 and inherit its patentable recitations. Therefore, it is respectfully submitted that claims 5 and 6 are allowable.

Claim 4 has been amended herein to include the recitations of claim 1 and 7. On page 4 of the Office Action, the Examiner states that claim 7 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including the limitations of claim 1.

Therefore, it is respectfully submitted that claim 4, as amended, is allowable.

REJECTION OF CLAIM 9 FOR OBVIOUSNESS UNDER 35 U.S.C. §103(a) AS BEING UPATENTABLE OVER CORRENTI IN VIEW OF KASSIR

The rejections of claim 9 is respectfully traversed and reconsideration is requested.

Claim 9, as amended, recites:

A method of conveying a wafer or other thin workpiece having a thickness of not more than 100 μm from its carrying location to another location using a conveyor system having a plate-shaped member, a plurality of Bernoulli nozzles to serve as lifting means, and a plurality of vacuum chucking nozzles to serve as holding means with the Bernoulli nozzles and the vacuum chucking nozzles being alternately formed on a workpiece chucking surface near an outer periphery of the plate-shaped member along the outer periphery, the method comprising:

moving the plate-shaped member to a first position on which a workpiece is placed,

lowering the plate-shaped member down to the workpiece;

starting the blowing of air from the Bernoulli nozzles;

chucking the workpiece by the Bernoulli nozzles;
lifting up the plate-shaped member;
starting suction by the vacuum chucking nozzles to chuck the workpiece by both of the vacuum chucking nozzles and Bernoulli nozzles;
stopping the blowing of air from the Bernoulli nozzles and chucking the workpiece by only the vacuum chucking nozzles; and
moving the plate-shaped member to a second position for processing of the next workpiece.

It is respectfully submitted that the cited references do not teach a method of conveying a wafer or other thin workpiece having a thickness of not more than 100 μm from its carrying location to another location for the conveying system as recited. Therefore, it is respectfully submitted that claim 9 patentably distinguishes over the prior art.

NEW CLAIM 10

New claim 10 depends from claim 4 and inherits its patentable recitations. Therefore, it is respectfully submitted that claim 10 patentably distinguishes over the prior art.

ALLOWABLE SUBJECT MATTER

On page 4, of the Office Action, the Examiner objects to claims 2, 3, 7 and 8 has being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but he states that these claims would be allowable if rewritten in independent for including all of the limitations of the base and any intervening claims.

Claim 2 has been cancelled herein, and its limitations have been incorporated into amended independent claim 1. Therefore, it is respectfully submitted that claim 1 is allowable. Claims 3, 7 and 8 depend from claim 1 and, thus, it is respectfully submitted that these claims patentably distinguish over the prior art, as they stand.

CONCLUSION

In accordance with the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that all outstanding objections and rejections have been overcome and/or rendered moot. Further, all pending claims patentably distinguish over the prior art. There being no further outstanding objections or

rejections, it is submitted that the application is in condition for allowance. An early action to that effect is courteously solicited.

Finally, if there are any formal matters remaining after this response, the Examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned to attend to these matters.

If there are any additional fees associated with filing of this Amendment, please charge the same to our Deposit Account No. 19-3935.

Respectfully submitted,

STAAS & HALSEY LLP

Date: August 15, 2005
By: David M. Pitcher
David M. Pitcher
Registration No. 25,908

1201 New York Avenue, NW, Suite 700
Washington, D.C. 20005
Telephone: (202) 434-1500
Facsimile: (202) 434-1501